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ABSTRACT

The teaching of communication strategies to learners of English as a second language is discussed. Definitions of communication strategies are examined, and a working definition is constructed: a technique used to solve problems in reaching a communication goal. The relationships between communication strategies and communicative competence and between communication strategies and learning strategies are considered. Five commonly-used strategies for communication problem-solving (paraphrasing, borrowing from the first language, miming, asking for help, avoiding) are identified, and classroom techniques and specific exercises for teaching them are outlined. The examples offered are intended for teachers of English to Japanese learners. Contains 32 references. (MSE)

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Teaching Communication Strategies

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Introduction

The teacher asks a student a question in English. The student does not know what to say. The other students are watching him in silence. The teacher repeats the question. The student knows the answer in Japanese, but he cannot express it in English. He continues to stand, at a loss. Then he says in a small voice, "I don't know."

This scene is common in English classes in Japan. Students do not know what to do when they face difficulty in communicating in English. "Teaching English as a means of communication" has been emphasized since the current Course of Study was put into practice, and a lot of "communication activities" such as games and interview activities are done in classes. However, only a few students are taught what to do when they fall into trouble in communicating in English. Therefore, the students just keep silent or say, "I don't know." Experiencing this kind of situation several times, the student gradually loses interest in learning English, and finally becomes disappointed. Rost (1996) describes the present situation in Japanese classrooms and says that few learners are taught how to select appropriate strategies and how to use them in communicating with others. He also says that the learners feel (and are told) that they have to "study" and "memorize" more words, phrases, language structures and conversation models so that they will not face such difficulties in the future.

If the students know some communication strategies, their reactions will be different. Even if they do not know exactly what to say, they will try to find ways to get close to the answer. Thus, teaching communication strategies will enable students to cope with trouble they face in communicating in English, either in class or outside the classroom.

What is "communication strategy"? What kind of strategies are there? I will attempt to address these questions in chapters I and II. I will examine the definitions and classifications of communication strategies by linguists and try to reach the definition and classification that are applicable to the EFL classes in Japanese junior high schools. Then, in chapter III, I will focus on speaking and will consider the ways to teach these strategies in class. I will state what aspect of each strategy to teach in class and present various examples of classroom activities. In the appendix, I will show samples of handouts used in the activities.

Chapter I. Definition of "communication strategy"

As the first step of this study, this chapter clarifies what "communication strategy" is. Various definitions by linguists are examined in the first section, and a working definition of the term is presented in the second section.

1. Definitions by linguists

What is "communication strategy"? Different linguists define this phrase differently. Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1983) define the phrase as follows:

> a systematic attempt by the learner to express or decode meaning in the target language, in situations where the appropriate systematic target language rules have not been found (p.5)

Tarone (1981) gives another definition of "communication strategy," focusing on communication betweer two people. The definition is as follows:

> a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared. (Meaning structures include both linguistic and sociolinguistic structures.) (p.72)

Corder (1983) uses the term "communicative strategy" instead of "communication strategy" and defines it in the following way:

> a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty (p.16)

Faerch and Kasper (1983) use the word "plan" to define "communication strategy." According to them, the execution of a "plan" will "lead to verbal behaviour which is expected to satisfy the original goal" (p.25). The "original goal" in this case is a communicative goal. Their definition of "communication strategy" is as follows:

> communication strategies are potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal(p.36)

Stern (1983) defines the phrase as follows:

> technique of coping with difficulties in communicating in an imperfectly known second language. (qtd. in Bialystok 1990. p.3)

2. Working definition

Clearly, there are several ways of defining this concept. In order to clarify what "communication strategy" is, I will select some key words from the definitions mentioned above.

<technique>

The first key words in the definitions are "attempt," "technique" and "plan." Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1983) say it is an "attempt." Corder (1983) and Stern (1983) say it is a "technique," and Faerch and Kasper (1983) say it is a "plan". Is a "communication strategy" an attempt, a technique or a plan? Faerch and Kasper give the word "plan" their own meaning, different from ordinary meanings, so here I will compare the other two words, "attempt" and "technique." An attempt is an effort to do something, whereas a technique is a way of doing some activity. Also, a technique is something that is mastered through learning and practice. We can say that communication strategies have both elements, but here, I regard it as an objective of teaching English, that is, something that can be taught in class. Therefore, I will put more emphasis on "Communication strategy as a technique".

<Solution for problems>

The next key words are "problem" and "difficulty." A communication strategy is something to be used when you face difficulty or a problem in communication. What is the "problem/difficulty?" According to Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1983), it is a situation "where the appropriate systematic target language rules have not been found." According to Faerch and Kasper (1983), it is a "problem in reaching a particular communicative goal." There are two kinds of problems/difficulties that we face in communication: those in expressing and those in understanding. In this paper, I will focus on the former. In other words, the problem is that you cannot say exactly what you want to say and, therefore, your message does not reach the intended receiver.

<Guidelines toward a communication goal>

Communication strategies are used to reach a certain communication goal, that is, to tell the other person(s) what you really want or need to say. In other words, communication strategies are guidelines toward a communication goal. This purpose of a communication strategy is mentioned in the above definitions. For example, Corder (1983) writes, "to express his meaning," and Faerch and Kasper (1983) write, "in reaching a particular communicative goal." Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1983) write, "to express or decode meaning in the target language." Stern (1983) writes, "in communicating in an imperfectly known second language."

Considering the key words above, in this paper, I will define a "communication strategy" as "a technique that is used to solve problems in reaching a communicative goal."

3. Communication strategies as communicative competence

Communication strategy is not an isolated concept. It plays an important part in communicative competence. That is, the ability to employ effective communication

strategies is an important factor of communicative competence. According to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence consists of at least the following three components:

a. grammatical competence – the knowledge of what is grammatically correct in a language
b. sociolinguistic competence – the knowledge of what is socially acceptable in a language
c. strategic competence – the knowledge of how to use one's language to communicate intended meaning (qtd. in Tarone 1984. p.128)

Tarone (1984) states that communication strategies are included in strategic competence. She also says that each of these components of communicative competence is extremely important as a goal in the foreign–language classroom.

Savignon (1983) also emphasizes the importance of teaching strategic competence. She writes as follows:

> The inclusion of strategic competence as a component of communicative competence at all levels is important because it demonstrates that regardless of experience and level of proficiency one never knows *all* a language. The ability to cope within limitations is an ever present component of communicative competence(p.46).

However, in English classrooms in Japan, only grammatical competence has been emphasized while sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence have not been dealt with in any depth. The situation is beginning to change because the present Course of Study, which was developed by the Ministry of Education, and which public school teachers are required to follow, emphasizes the importance of communicative competence. Since this Course of Study was publicized and implemented, many teachers have come to show interest in communicative competence. Still, the study of sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence lags far behind that of grammatical competence. Therefore, in order to comply with the objectives of the Course of Study, teachers in Japan need to familiarize themselves with sociolinguistic and strategic competence and incorporate them into their instruction. Doing so will make their teaching more effective.

4. Communication strategies and learning strategies

Communication strategies (CS) not only play an important part in communicative competence but are also related to language learning strategies (LS). Further exploring the essence of the meaning of communication strategies, Faerch and Kasper (1986) state that CS and LS are functionally different yet interrelated strategies.

According to Bialystok (1983), the distinction between these two strategies has been particularly controversial. She writes that learning strategies refer to "activities in which the learner may engage for the purpose of improving target language competence,"(p.101)

whereas communication strategies include "all attempts to manipulate a limited linguistic system in order to promote communication"(p.102).

Oxford (1990) says that learning strategies are "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations." She regards the use of communication strategies as a kind of language learning strategy. (She uses the term "compensation strategies" instead of communication strategies, and explains that compensation strategies "aid learners in overcoming knowledge gaps and continuing to communicate authentically"(p.9).)

The focus of this paper is teaching English to Japanese junior high school students. For Japanese junior high school students who are learning English as a foreign language, the chances to communicate in English are mainly in English classes. In other words, they need communication strategies in learning situations. This means that the use of communication strategies can help students learn English more effectively as well as solve the problems they face in communicating. Therefore, I regard the strategies helpful both as communication strategies and as learning strategies.

Chapter II. Classification of communication strategies

The definition of communication strategies was given in the previous chapter. Now, Chapter II will present examples of the strategies and classify them into five categories.

1. Classification by linguists

What kind of communication strategies are there, and how are they classified? Several linguists classify them in different ways. Faerch and Kasper (1983) divide communication strategies into two main kinds: reduction strategies and achievement strategies. They write that when one faces a problem in communication, one tries either to eliminate the problem by changing the communication goal or to tackle the problem. They call the first behavior "avoidance behavior" and the second "achievement behavior." When one adopts avoidance behavior, one employs a "reduction strategy", and when one adopts achievement behavior, one employs an "achievement strategy." Faerch and Kasper (1983) divide reduction strategies into "formal reduction strategies" and "functional reduction strategies," and list subtypes of each kind. Their classification of these three communication strategies are as follows:

A. Formal reduction strategies
  a. phonological ex) substituting [ð] with [d]
  b. morphological ex) avoiding subordinate clauses containing the subjunctive
  c. syntactic ex) using active instead of passive
  d. lexical ex) avoiding untranslatable words

B. Functional reduction strategies
  a. actional reduction
  b. modal reduction
  c. reduction of the propositional content:
    1) topic avoidance (avoiding linguistically problematic topics)
    2) message abandonment (cutting communication short)
    3) meaning replacement (using a more general expression)

C. Achievement strategies
  a. compensatory strategies:
    1) code switching (switching from L2 to either L1 or another language)
    2) interlingual transfer (combination of features from interlanguage (IL) and L1)
    3) inter−/ intra lingual transfer (generalization of an IL rule)
    4) IL based strategies:
      i) generalization (using a generalized IL item)

ii) paraphrase ex) interest → have some more money

iii) word coinage ex) balloon → airball

iv) restructuring ex) hungry → my tummy is ... I must eat something

5) cooperative strategies (to solve the problem on a cooperative basis)

6) non-linguistic strategies ex) mime, gesture, sound-imitation

b. retrieval strategies ex) waiting for the term to appear

Tarone (1984), however, divides communication strategies into five major kinds(p.131).

A. Avoidance
- a. Topic avoidance (trying not to talk about the concept)
- b. Message abandonment (to stop talking in mid-utterance)

B. Paraphrase
- a. Approximation (using superordinate term, analogy, etc.)
- b. Word coinage (making up a new word) ex)balloon → airball
- c. Circumlocution (describing the properties or action)

C. Borrowing
- a. Literal translation (translating word-for-word from L1)
- b. Language mix (using L1 words without translating)

D. Appeal for Assistance (asking for the correct term)

E. Mime (using non-verbal tactics)

Yarmohammadi & Seif (1992) conducted an experiment and classified the strategies employed by the following subjects:

A. Reduction Strategies

a. Topic Avoidance (avoiding talking about the topic altogether)

b. Message Abandonment (abandoning the message)

c. Semantic Avoidance (talking in more general terms)

B. Achievement Strategies

a. Strategies based upon other codes

1) Code Switching (drawing on another linguistic code)

2) Foreignizing (using L2 phonology and/or morphology for a native word)

3) Literal Translation

b. IL-based Strategies

1) Word Coinage ex) balloon → plastic ball

2) Generalization ex) son → boy

3) Superordinate Term ex) wash-tub → container, balloon → toy

4) Approximation ex) clothes-line → cable

5) Paraphrase ex) effigy → a thing like a feared man

6) Circumlocution ex) wash-tub → wide mouthed big container

c. Cooperative Strategies

1) Appeal for Verification ex) "the woman was ... *frightened, yes?*"

2) Appeal for Direct Assistance

3) Appeal to Dictionary

d. Non-Linguistic Strategy

Mime

e. Retrieval Strategies

Compared with the previous classifications, Pattison (1987) categorizes the strategies rather broadly:

A. Paraphrase or approximation (using words you know to describe those you do not)

B. Borrowing or inventing words

(using words from any language, usually from L1, in place of unknown FL words)

C. Gesture (anything from pointing to elaborate mime)

D. Asking for feedback

E. Reduction (simplifying, changing or abandoning the difficult parts of the message)

2. Simpler classification

As can be seen, various classification systems exist for communication strategies depending on the linguist. Others exist, as well. No one system has general agreement. Since the main concern of this paper is to enhance the students' communication strategies, I will employ a classification that is as simple as possible. I will divide the strategies broadly into five kinds: Paraphrasing, Borrowing from L1, Miming, Asking for Help, and Avoiding.

(1) Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing means expressing ideas in a different way using the target language. The learner explains the idea by describing the appearance or function in his/her own words. Using synonyms and antonyms is also an example of paraphrasing.

For example, when a learner does not know the word "vacuum cleaner", (s)he could explain it as "the machine that we use when we clean our rooms." Here the learner is describing the function of a vacuum cleaner.

This strategy is used not only by language learners but also by native speakers of the language. As a matter of fact, all of the strategies (except Borrowing from L1) could be used by native speakers.

(2) Borrowing from L1

Instead of using the target language, learners sometimes use their native languages to express their ideas. This is "Borrowing from L1." In place of the words or phrases they do not know in the target language, the learners use words or phrases in their native language without translating. This is one way of borrowing. In the case of Japanese

learners of English, they tend to use imported words from English. The problem is that those imported words often have different meanings from the original English words. For example, "trainer" is an imported word from English, but in Japanese it means a sweatshirt. Therefore, if a learner says, "I have a new *trainer*," it would cause misunderstanding.

Another way of borrowing is to translate phrases or clauses in their native language literally into the target language. For example, the Japanese expression "asameshi-mae" literally means "before breakfast", but it actually means work that is easy to do, (so easy that you could finish it even before breakfast). Japanese learners of English might borrow this expression and say, "This work is *before breakfast*." Unfortunately, the learners would not succeed in conveying their idea. Thus, "Borrowing from L1" has the risk of causing misunderstanding or a complete failure in conveying their ideas.

(3) Miming

Miming refers to expressing ideas using physical movements such as gestures and facial expressions. Also, other ways of expressing ideas without using language, such as drawing pictures and imitating sounds, could be included here as variations of miming. Miming could be used either separately or combined with other strategies. Miming is helpful for elementary language learners, but they need to be careful because the same gesture sometimes has different meanings in different cultures. For example, when a Japanese person thrusts a hand forward with the palm down and repeats curling and uncurling the fingers, (s)he is telling somebody to come closer. However, if an American person sees that gesture, (s)he would understand that (s)he is being told to go away.

(4) Asking for Help

Instead of solving problems for themselves, language learners can ask the interlocutors for help. They can either ask questions directly or give signs that they are having a problem. Pauses, fillers ("erm", "well", "you know", etc.) and facial expressions are some examples of such signs.

Using a dictionary or a textbook could be regarded as a variation of this strategy.

(5) Avoiding

When learners do not have the exact words to express ideas, instead of trying to find the means to convey the ideas, they sometimes give up talking. This is known as the Avoiding Strategy.

For example, the learners may try to maintain the conversation by changing the topic, or they may prevent the continued flow of the conversation by falling silent or simply saying "I don't know." The latter is often used unconsciously by Japanese students and creates an uncomfortable atmosphere in the classroom.

Chapter III. Communication strategies: What strategies to teach and how to teach them

In the previous chapters, the definition and the classification of communication strategies have been presented. Chapter III will connect the theory of communication strategies with the classroom in Japanese junior high schools, and explore what strategies to teach and how to teach them in class.

As mentioned in Chapter II, some communication strategies (CS) are effective, but others are not. Teachers should choose the effective strategies and teach their students how to use those strategies appropriately. Faerch and Kasper (1983) state that if teaching CS means not only passing on new information but also making the learners conscious of their (already existing) behavior, then obviously teachers should teach CS, especially how to use them appropriately(p.55). If learners are not taught anything about CS, they tend to rely on the strategies that do not work well, such as non-effective kinds of Borrowing from L1 and Avoiding. Teachers should make the students aware of the more effective strategies and help them learn how to use them.

When teachers teach CS, they should teach through activities, not through lectures, so that the students actually experience using the strategies. Bialystok (1990) says that learners will learn to use CS effectively as their language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are cultivated(p.146). However, learners already face problems in communication before their language skills are cultivated. Besides, in spite of the various activities practiced for improving language skills, Japanese junior high school students do not seem to be using CS effectively even after their language skills have improved. Therefore, in addition to the ordinary activities practiced in class, teachers should prepare more activities to teach CS.

1. Paraphrasing

(1) Teach useful expressions

Paraphrasing is one of the most effective communication strategies, but it is difficult for introductory learners to use because in order to paraphrase, one needs to know substitute expressions. Therefore, paraphrasing is a strategy mainly for intermediate and advanced learners. However, preparation to teach this strategy should be started at an earlier stage. Thinking about junior high school students in Japan, paraphrasing is difficult even for ninth graders who have studied English for two years or more because they lack vocabulary for paraphrasing. The English textbooks do not contain enough expressions useful for paraphrasing. Therefore, teachers should teach words and phrases needed to use

this strategy little by little, starting at an earlier stage.

What kinds of words are needed for paraphrasing? According to Tarone (1984), paraphrasing requires vocabulary and sentence structures for describing, such as shape, size, color, texture, function, the use of analogy ("It's like an octopus."), superordinate term ("It's a type of ---."), and so on. However, if you think of shape, for example, school textbooks in Japan do not include even "square", "triangle" or "circle." In order for the students to be able to paraphrase, teachers need to teach necessary words and expressions in addition to those in the textbooks. They can start at the introductory level because words like square, triangle and circle are easy to understand, even for beginners.

(2) Start with Graded Direct Method

In order to teach students the ways of describing in English, the Graded Direct Method is one of the best methods. The Graded Direct Method was devised based on the ideas of Ogden (1968) and Richards & Gibson (1945). In this method, the target language is taught directly connected with its meaning, without intervention of the learners' mother tongue. Also, in teaching vocabulary, words with general meaning are taught before words with specific meaning. For example, "seat" is taught before "chair", "stool" or "sofa". Therefore, students can describe "chair", "stool" and "sofa" using the word "seat" which they learned before. The Graded Direct Method has not been adopted in Japan because special training is necessary for teachers, and also because it is sometimes criticized as being too artificial. However, in my opinion, this method should be re-evaluated from the viewpoint of teaching communication strategies.

(3) Prepare activities

If the students start learning words and expressions for description, they would acquire many in two years. Then the teachers should prepare activities where students are required to use the paraphrasing strategy. Here are some examples of such activities.

【 Activity 1 】 Things Japanese

In this activity, students are required to explain typical Japanese things to a native speaker of English. This activity is for a team-teaching lesson with an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT). It is suitable for ninth graders.

<Preparation>

- handouts for students (names of typical Japanese things are written on them)
  (See Handout 1 in Appendix.)
- picture(s) to be placed on the blackboard (pictures of the things in the handout)

<Procedure>

1) Students pick out some of the things in the handout, and prepare to explain them in

English.

2) Students work in pairs and try to explain to their partners the things they chose.

3) Some students come to the front, (either voluntarily or called by the teacher). They try to explain the things they chose to the ALT.

4) The ALT listens to the explanation, and points at the picture of the thing that (s)he thinks was explained by the student. If the student seems to be at a loss, the ALT asks him(her) questions that guide the description.

In this activity, the students are naturally required to use a paraphrasing strategy because typical Japanese things usually do not have equivalent words in English. By not only practicing themselves but also by watching and listening to their classmates practice, the students are expected to learn the paraphrasing strategy.

【 Activity 2 】 Twenty questions

Students try to guess something that the teacher has chosen by asking the teacher twenty or fewer yes-no questions. This traditional game is a good practice for paraphrasing because the players need to describe unknown things from various points of view in order to figure out what they are.

【 Activity 3 】 Guess the word

The idea of this game is based on an information gap activity in Pattison (1987). This is a pair-work activity, and students try to guess the words that their partners explain.

The teacher prepares a set of handouts, A and B. (See Handout 2 in Appendix.) Each handout has a list of words to be guessed. The class is divided into pairs, and in each pair, one student has A and the other has B. In each pair, the student with A picks out one word from the list and explains it. The other student listens to the explanation and tries to guess the word. When (s)he gets the correct answer, the students switch roles and this time the student with B explains a word in the list and the other student tries to guess the word. They continue in the same way and try to guess as many words as possible in a limited time (approx. 5 min.).

Before starting pair-work, students need to be taught how to explain words. As a preliminary activity, the teacher explains some words that are not on either list and has the students guess the words. Thus, the teacher gives the students a good model of explaining words, that is, paraphrasing.

2. Borrowing from L1

(1) What to teach

Borrowing from L1 is the strategy of using one's native language to solve a problem. Japanese learners of English seldom use Japanese words in their English sentences

(without translating) because they know that the two languages are completely different and that it does not work. Instead, they tend to use imported words in their English sentences.

The Japanese language has a lot of imported words, and many of them are from English. Generally speaking, using these imported words can be an effective strategy, but both teachers and students should know that it has problems, too. These problems can be classified into the following four kinds: a) change of pronunciation, b) change of form, c) change of meaning, and d) words from languages other than English.

a) Change of pronunciation

When imported words are used in Japanese sentences, they are pronounced in the Japanese way. Therefore, when Japanese learners of English try to use those words in English sentences, they might pronounce them incorrectly and fail in conveying the intended ideas. For example, the word radio is imported into Japanese, but it is pronounced as [rûdʒio]. The word "hotel" is also imported into Japanese, but it is pronounced as [hóteru], and the primary stress is placed on the first syllable. If Japanese learners of English use these words in English and pronounce them in the Japanese way, their interlocutors will have difficulty in understanding them. Therefore, the teachers need to tell the students to check the correct pronunciation of the imported words when they use them in English, either by checking a dictionary or by asking the interlocutor if (s)he is a native speaker of English.

b) Change of form

When some words are imported from English and used in Japanese, the form of the words are often changed. When the learners use those words in English, they need to use the original form. For example, the word "word processor" is shortened to "wor-pro" when it is used in Japanese, and the word "television" becomes "telebi" in Japanese. English speakers would not understand if a Japanese learner says "I want a new wor-pro."

c) Change of meaning

As mentioned in Chapter II-2(2), some English words change their meanings when they are used in Japanese. When Japanese learners use these words in English without knowing the original meanings, they cannot make themselves understood correctly. For example, when Japanese people say "cooler", they mean "air conditioner", not a container to keep things cool. "Consent" does not mean agreement, but it means electrical outlet. When a Japanese speaker says, "I live in a *mansion*," he just means he lives in a condominium, not in a large house for rich people. The teachers need to make the students aware of such differences in meaning when English words are imported into Japanese.

d) Words from other languages

Not all imported words in Japanese are from English. Therefore, if a student tries to use an imported word from a language other than English, what (s)he says often does not make sense. For example, the word "orgel" is an imported word from Dutch, so if a learner says "I bought an *orgel*," the interlocutor will not understand that the learner bought a "music box". Likewise, the word "chou a la creme" came from French, and it means "cream puff". English-speaking people would be surprised to hear a Japanese person say, "I ate *shoe cream* (Japanese way of pronouncing the word *chou a la creme*)."

All these possible problems suggest that learners need to be careful in using this strategy and that teachers need to inform their students of the risk they are taking when they use imported words in their English sentences.

(2) How to teach Borrowing

In order to inform the students of the problems contained in the use of imported words in speaking English, the following activity on imported words would be helpful. It would be even more helpful if the lesson is taught in collaboration with a native speaker of English.

【 Activity 】 Imported words

In this activity, learners give examples of imported words and check if those words can be used in their imported form when they speak English.

<Procedure>

1) The teacher tells the students to think of as many imported words as possible and to write them down in their notebooks. The students can write the words either in English or in Japanese.

2) The students tell the class the words they wrote in their notebooks. The teacher writes them on the blackboard.

3) The teacher selects approximately 10-15 words on the blackboard and circles them. Then the teacher tells the students to copy the circled words in their notebooks. When choosing the words, the teacher needs to select words that cover the four kinds of problems mentioned in the previous section (2(1) a)-d)).

4) The teacher tells the students to decide if those words can be used directly in English sentences and to mark each word as follows:

○ The word can be used as it is (if pronounced correctly).

▽ The form of the word needs to be changed.

△ The meaning of the word is different in English.

× The word does not exist in English.

5) Checking the answers. The students learn the correct pronunciation, form, and meaning. If this is a team-teaching lesson, the assistant teacher (native speaker of English) explains the correct use of the words.

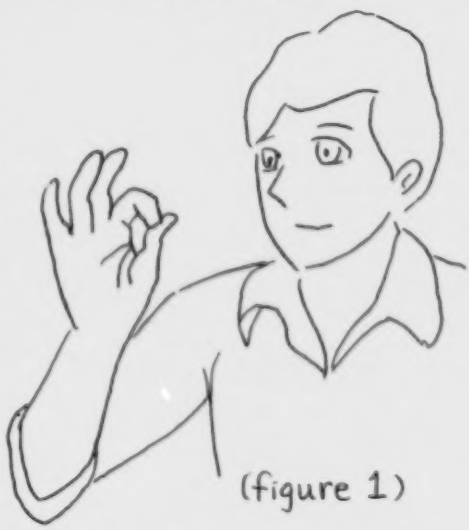
Because there are many imported words in Japanese, it might be better to pre-select a category, or class of words to choose in the class. For example, the teacher tells the students to think of only "the things that are found in a house", "something that you can eat or drink", "something related to sports", etc.

3. Miming

(1) Different gestures in different cultures

Miming is a useful strategy, especially for elementary learners who have limited vocabulary in the target language. Antes (1996) says that gestures fulfill such purposes as "clarification, emphasis, avoidance of redundancy, and replacement of speech altogether" and that learners need to have some knowledge of the gestures in the target language.

Miming is useful, but the problem is that gestures are sometimes different from culture to culture. The same meaning can be represented with different gestures, and the same gestures can have different meanings. For example, when people point to themselves, American people usually use their thumbs and point at their chests, whereas Japanese people use their forefingers and point at their noses. Also, when Japanese people make a ring with their forefinger and thumb (figure 1), it represents money or it means that something is good, but in parts of France, according to Bull (1984), it means that something is worthless. Therefore, teachers need to inform their students of some of the differences between their own culture and the culture of the countries using the target language.



(figure 1)

(2) Teaching miming

Antes (1996) gives some examples of teaching gestures in class.

【 Activity 1 】 Guessing the meaning

The teacher speaks to the students, while at the same time using gestures. Sometimes the teacher expresses his ideas using only gestures. The students are told to guess what the teacher means to say.

This activity would work better in a team-teaching lesson with an assistant teacher

from another country. The teacher talks with the assistant teacher beforehand and selects gestures that have different meanings from those in the students' own culture. The assistant teacher demonstrates the gestures in class and tells the students to guess the meaning.

【 Activity 2 】 Using videos

First, the teacher tells the students to watch a segment of a video with the sound turned off. The students watch the video paying attention to the gestures. Then the teacher plays the video with the sound on, and the students examine how the gestures helped the speaker convey his/her ideas.

These activities will help the students understand how gestures work in communication and how gestures are different from culture to culture. Both of these activities can be done in ordinary lessons, and neither of them takes too much time.

In order to have the students experience using miming in speaking English, the following activities would be useful. <Activity 3> is an adaptation from Pattison (1987), and <activity 4> is an adaptation from a TV program in Japan.

【 Activity 3 】 The speechless tourist

This is a pair-work, role-play activity. In each pair, one student plays the role of a Japanese tourist shopping in an American department store, and the other student plays the role of a store clerk. The tourist tries to express some meaning through mime, and the store clerk tries to guess what the tourist is saying.

<Preparation>

- Sentences to be guessed

  (The sentences are written on different cards. Each sentence includes some words or phrases that must be expressed with miming.)

- Handouts (See Handout 3 in Appendix.)

  (Sentences for the pair-work are written on them. The teacher prepares two sets of handouts, and each student in the same pair receives a different handout.)

<Procedure>

The tourist is shopping in a department store. The tourist speaks to a shop clerk. The tourist does not know how to say certain words(phrases) in English, and tries to explain them using mimes. The shop clerk guesses what the tourist is trying to say.

1) Teacher – Students

The teacher plays the role of a tourist, and the students guess the meaning.

2) Volunteer student – Students

A volunteer student plays the role of a tourist, and the other students try to guess

the meaning. Two or three volunteer students come to the front of the class in turn. Each volunteer student receives a card from the teacher and tries to convey the meaning of the sentence written on the card.

3) Pair work

The teacher distributes two sets of handouts. The students in each pair receive different handouts. In each pair, one student plays the role of the tourist, and the other student guesses the meaning. When the correct answer is found, they switch roles. Each pair tries to find as many answers as possible within a limited time. (5–10min.)

<Example> "I'd like some (medicine) for (headache)."

Tourist: I'd like some (gesture of taking a pill).

Clerk: Candy?

Tourist: No, no. This. (gesture of being sick, and taking a pill).

Clerk: Oh, medicine?

Tourist: Yes! For –– (gesture of having a headache).

Clerk: Headache?

Tourist: Yes!

Clerk: So you want some medicine for a headache.

Tourist: That's right.

【 Activity 4 】 Charade

This is a game with two to four groups competing. A student from each group demonstrates a gesture in front of the class, and the other students on the same team try to guess what the student is trying to say.

<Preparation>

– Sentences to be guessed

(The sentences are written on different cards.)

<Procedure>

1) The teacher divides the class into two to four groups.

2) A student from the first group comes to the front. The student receives a card from the teacher and tries to convey the meaning through gestures. Before the student starts the gesture, the teacher tells the class how many words the sentence is made up of, and draws the same number of brackets on the blackboard. (The correct sentence is written in the brackets later, one word in each bracket.)

3) The student starts gesturing. The other students in the same group say what they think is correct while the gesture is being demonstrated. When a student says a correct word in the sentence, the teacher writes the word in the appropriate bracket. For example,

when the sentence is, "I saw a big bird," and somebody says "bird," the teacher writes the word in the fifth bracket: ( )( )( )( )(bird).

4) The student in front continues the gesture until the sentence is completed. The teacher keeps time and writes down on the blackboard how long it took to find the answer. If the correct answer cannot be gotten within a limited time (approx. 3 min.), the team is out.

5) Each group plays in turn, and the group which took the shortest time to complete the sentence wins the game. If all the teams are out, the team that found the most words wins.

6) If there is enough time, they can move on to a second round.

4. Asking for Help

(1) What to teach

In conversations, a learner does not have to do all the talking by him(her)self. (S)he can ask for the cooperation of the interlocutor. For example, if a learner wants to say "carrot" and (s)he does not know the word, (s)he could say, "uh-- what's that orange-colored vegetable, -- horses like eating it--?" Then the interlocutor could possibly tell him(her) the word. Therefore, if a learner knows how to ask for cooperation, it would be a great help for him(her) although it may not be a perfect solution. Tarone (1981) calls this strategy "Appeal for Assistance", and Faerch and Kasper call it "cooperative strategies." Here, I call it "Asking for Help."

Teaching the strategy of Asking for Help consists of two parts: teaching the useful expressions and practicing using the expressions. If the students do not know appropriate expressions, they cannot use this strategy. Even if the learners know such expressions, if they do not practice using them, they will not be able to use them when they need to. Therefore, both teaching expressions and providing activities to use them are necessary.

(2) Teach useful expressions

What expressions are useful when a speaker asks for the help of the listener? Tarone (1984) gives the following examples of expressions for negotiation:

- appeals for repetition (e.g., "What?")
- mime (e.g., puzzled facial expressions of various types)
- questioning repeats (e.g., A: The water table. B: The water ...?)
- approximation or paraphrases (e.g., A: The jugworm. B:... Junkworm?)(p.135)

Pattison (1987) gives the following examples of phrases for feedback:

- What's that (called) in English? How do you say that in English?
- Sorry, I don't understand what you mean/what X means. I'm afraid I can't follow: do you mean ...? What does X mean?

– Could you repeat that please?

– Do you understand? Do you know what I mean?

However, these expressions are uttered mainly by the listeners when they do not understand what the speaker has said. These expressions are necessary, but the learners also need to know the expressions to ask for help when they are speaking.

What expressions are helpful when speakers do not know what to say? From the speakers' standpoint, the expressions needed would be *questions using paraphrase*. For example, when a speaker does not know how to say "octopus," (s)he can ask a question the following way:

A: I hate the animal... what's the sea animal with eight legs?

B: An octopus?

Besides using paraphrases, speakers can also use miming when they ask questions. For example, when a speaker asks about an octopus, he could describe its size using a gesture:

A: I hate the animal... what's the sea animal with eight legs?

It's about this big...

Asking questions is not the only way to ask for help. Speakers can ask for help using *hesitation expressions*. The speaker pauses in the middle of a sentence, and waits for the listener to continue the sentence. For example, when a speaker does not know how to say "stomachache", (s)he can hesitate this way:

A: I couldn't go because I had stom...uh....

B: Stomachache?

(3) Practice asking for help

As an activity to practice this strategy, here is an example. The name of the activity is "Don't use the Words." This involves pair work, and the learners ask questions of each other. There are some words that are not allowed to be used, and when the learner needs to use the words, (s)he has to have his(her) partner guess them. This activity is suitable for eighth and ninth graders because it requires the students to have enough vocabulary and ability to describe the target words in their own words.

【 Activity 】 Don't use the words

<Preparation> handouts for students (See Handout 4 in Appendix.)

<Procedure>

1) In each pair, student A asks student B questions written in the handout. In answering, student B is not allowed to say certain words. Instead, student B has to have student A say the word.

2) When student A has finished asking questions, the students switch roles, and this time,

student B asks questions and student A answers.

<Example Question>

* Question: Which season do you like the best?
* Words not allowed to use: spring, summer, fall, winter

The dialogue would proceed in such a way as is shown in the following example.

<Example Dialog 1>

A: Which season do you like the best?

B: Well, I like July, August...

A: You like summer?

B: Yes!

<Example Dialog 2>

A: Which season do you like the best?

B: Uh... the hottest season.

A: Summer?

B: That's it!

Because the students are required to have the partners say the answers, they need to use the strategy of Asking for Help. Paraphrasing and miming play an important role in this activity, too. After practicing several activities of this kind, the students are expected to get used to this strategy and to be able to use it in real-life communication.

5. Avoiding

(1) What to teach

When a learner adopts the Avoiding Strategy, (s)he is trying to eliminate the problem instead of solving it. In other words, when learners adopt this strategy, they cannot attain their initial communication goal. However, this strategy cannot be completely rejected as useless because it has merit, too.

The merit of the Avoiding Strategy is, as Oxford (1990) writes, that it emotionally protects the learner and enables him/her to speak about other things later in the conversation. In other words, by not sticking to the current problem that is interrupting the communication and changing the direction of the conversation, the learner can keep the communication alive. Therefore, learners should be ready to use this strategy as a last resort in case they face a difficult problem.

You can broadly divide the Avoiding Strategy into two types: Positive Avoiding and Negative Avoiding. When learners adopt the Positive Avoiding Strategy, they avoid the problem in order to keep the communication working. For example, when they change a topic to a more familiar one, it can be said that the strategy is Positive Avoiding. On the

other hand, when they employ the Negative Avoiding Strategy, they shut down the communication. The typical examples of this strategy are saying simply, "I don't know," or keeping complete silence. This is the type of strategy the Japanese (junior) high school students tend to adopt. They do so because that is all they can think of. What teachers need to do is, obviously, enable the students to adopt the Positive Avoiding Strategy.

(2) Teach useful expressions

Teaching the Avoiding Strategy consists of two parts: teaching useful expressions and providing opportunities to use this strategy.

First, learners need to know the expressions they can use in order to avoid the problem and shift to a different topic. Kehe & Kehe (1994) divide such expressions into two types, "killers" and "keepers," and list examples of both types. According to them, killers are used to "kill" the conversation, and keepers are used to "keep" the conversation going. These expressions are used "when you don't know what to say", "when you are asked an embarrassing question," "when the question is difficult," "when you don't want to answer," etc. Here is their list of expressions:

<Killers>

I don't really know.	I have no idea.
That's a good question.	I'd have to think about that.
I'm not sure.	Umm, ahhh, I'd rather not say.

<Keepers>

What do you think?	How about you?
How do you feel?	What about you?

(p.17)

These are expressions mainly used when answering questions. However, even when they are not answering questions, learners often have difficulty in expressing their ideas. Therefore, in addition to these expressions, learners need to know the ones to shift a topic when they are expressing their ideas. As examples of such expressions, the following phrases would be useful for the learners:

Oh, by the way, ...	What do you think about ( )?
Talking about ( ), ...	Did you know (that ...)?
That reminds me, ...	I hear (that ...).

(3) Prepare activities

Once students have learned expressions for Avoiding, they need to practice using them. The following activity (Activity 1) would be useful for that purpose. It is based on Kehe & Kehe (1994).

【 Activity 1 】 Don't answer

This is a pair-work activity. Students receive handouts on which are written some personal or difficult questions. Instead of answering the questions, students respond using expressions for Avoiding.

<Preparation>

- Handouts for students (Two different kinds of handouts are prepared. Each kind has some personal or difficult questions. See Handout 5 in Appendix.)

<Procedure>

1) The teacher distributes the handouts. In each pair, the two students receive handouts with different questions. Then the teacher explains how to use the keepers and killers appropriately.

2) Demonstration. The teacher calls a student and asks him/her a difficult question that is not included in the handouts. The student is told to respond with an Avoiding Strategy.

3) The students are divided into pairs. In each pair, one student asks a question and the other student responds using the Avoiding Strategy. Then the first student responds to it either directly or using the Avoiding Strategy.

4) The students switch roles, and move on to the next question.

<Example>

A: Do you believe in God?

B: I'm not sure. Talking about God, did you see "Touched by an Angel" last Sunday?

A: No, I didn't. I was busy with my homework.

【 Activity 2 】 Expanding questions

Once the topic is shifted to a more familiar one, learners need to keep on talking on the new topic. In order to do that, learners should be able to ask related questions. This activity is useful for practicing asking questions. It is based on Omaggio (1981) and Birckbichler (1982).

<Preparation>

- Handouts for students (See Handout 6 in Appendix.)

<Procedure>

1) The teacher distributes the handouts.

2) There are several questions on the handouts. The students think of three questions of their own related to each question on the handout and write them on the handouts (or in their notebooks).

3) The students are divided into pairs. In each pair, the students talk about the first question. Using the related questions they wrote, the students keep talking for a certain

length of time (approx. 3 min.).

4) The teacher keeps time and tells the students to move on to the next question. The students start talking about the second question and continue in the same way.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have examined the definitions of "communication strategy" by some linguists and have come to regard it as a technique that can be used to solve problems in reaching a communicative goal. Next, I listed examples of communication strategies and classified them into five kinds: Paraphrasing, Borrowing from L1, Miming, Asking for Help, and Avoiding. Then I examined each strategy and suggested what strategies to teach and how to teach them. I also gave examples of the activities to be done in class.

However, I was able to make only suggestions for activities, and the results of the activities are yet to be shown. How do students actually respond in class? How do these activities help students learn communication strategies? The answers to these questions are expected to be made clear in future studies.

The teacher asks a student a question. The student knows the answer in Japanese, but he does not know how to say it in English. Instead of saying the exact word, the student uses substitute words and asks for the teacher's help, saying, "Uh... what is 'saying something in different, easier words'?" The teacher answers, "You mean, paraphrasing?" "Yes, paraphrasing!" That uncomfortable silence in the classroom is not present anymore. The students who have learned communication strategies would be more interested in language study, and would make the classes more lively.

Appendix

【 Handout 1 】 Things Japanese (p.11)

◆ Let's introduce some Japanese culture to Mr./Ms.(name of the ALT).

Explain these things (a-e) in English.

- What do you call it in Japanese?
- shape; What does it look like?
- size, color
- Where can you get it? ...etc.

<example> o-hashi (chopsticks)

We call these o-hashi in Japanese.
We use them when we eat.
We use them to pick up food, and also to cut food into smaller pieces.
They are a pair of sticks, and they are about 20cm long.
Each pair has a different color and different design.
You can get them at department stores and supermarkets. ...etc.

a) o-mikuji *(* a slip of fortune-telling paper)*
b) o-mochi *(* rice cake)*
c) hagoita *(* a racket used in a traditional Japanese game)*
d) kotatsu *(* a table with heater)*
e) menko *(* cards for a boy's game)*

** The words in italics are not written in the handouts.*

【 Handout 2 】 Guess the Word (p.12)

《 Handout A 》

1. Explain these words (a-e) in English. Your partner listens to you and tries to guess what they are.

<example>

This is a machine. You use it to write sentences.
It has a keyboard, a monitor, and a printer.
It is a little bigger than a lap top computer. *(answer: word processor)*

a) camera
b) calendar
c) library
d) Walkman

e) alarm clock

2. Listen to your partner. What is (s)he explaining? Guess what they are.

《 Handout B 》

1. Listen to your partner. What is (s)he explaining? Guess what they are.

2. Explain these words (a-e) in English. Your partner listens to you and tries to guess what they are.

<example>

This is a machine. ...

a) umbrella

b) dictionary

c) hospital

d) *tamagotchi*

e) digital watch

【 Handout 3 】 The Speechless Tourist (p.16)

《 Handout A 》

1. You are shopping in a department store in the United States.

Tell the clerk (your partner) what you want in English.

You can not use the words in the brackets. Use gestures or explain in other words.

a) I'd like a (guitar).

b) I'd like a (tennis racket).

c) I'd like some (dog food).

d) I'd like (two bottles) of (red wine).

2. Now you are a clerk. A Japanese tourist (your partner) visits your department store and tells you what (s)he wants. Guess what (s)he is trying to say.

<example>

A: I'd like some —(gesture)—.

B: You'd like some medicine?

A: Yes. For —(gesture)—.

B: For a headache? You'd like some medicine for a headache?

A: That's right!

《 Handout B 》

1. You are a store clerk in an American department store. A Japanese tourist (your

partner) visits your department store, and ...

<example>

A: I'd like ---(gesture)---

B: You'd like some medicine?

.....

2. Now you are a Japanese tourist shopping at a department store in the United States. Tell the clerk (your partner) what you want in English...

a) I'd like a (violin).

b) I'd like a (soccer ball).

c) I'd like some (baby food).

d) I'd like a (T-shirt) for (my mother).

【 Handout 4 】 Don't Use the Words (p.19)

1. Ask your partner these questions. Listen to your partner and guess the answer. (Your partner cannot use the words in brackets.)

<example>

You: Which season do you like the best?

Partner: Well, what do you call the hottest season?

You: You like summer?

Partner: That's right!

(1) What color do you like the best? (× names of colors)

(2) Which Japanese city do you want to visit? (× names of cities)

(3) What club are you in? (× names of clubs)

(4) If you have $1,000, what will you buy? (× names of things)

2. Answer your partner's questions. When you answer, you cannot use the words in the brackets. Explain with gestures or other words, and ask for your partner's help.

(1) (× names of food) **What Japanese food do you like the best?*

(2) (× names of countries) **What country do you want to visit?*

(3) (× names of subjects) **What subject do you like the best?*

(4) (× names of things) **What do you want for your birthday?*

** The words in italics are not written in the handouts.*

【 Handout 5 】 Don't Answer (p.22)

1. Ask your partner these questions. Then respond to your partner.

a) Do you have a boy/girlfriend?

b) How much do you weigh?

c) What is life?

d) Who do you think is the best teacher in our school?

e) What is the biggest problem among Japanese teenagers?

* Some of these questions are too personal, and not appropriate to ask people you do not know very well.

<Example>

A: Do you believe in God?

B: I'm not sure. Talking about God, did you see "Touched by an Angel" last Sunday?

A: No, I didn't. I was busy with my homework.

2. Your partner asks you difficult/personal questions. Do not answer the questions directly. Use these expressions, and keep the conversation going.

<Examples of Expressions for Avoiding>

- That's a good question. What do you think?
- I'm not sure. How about you?
- Umm, I'd rather not say.

By the way, what do you think about ...?

Talking about ( ), did you know that ...?

I hear that ... Do you think it's true?

【 Handout 6 】 Expanding Questions (p.22)

1. Here are some questions. Write your own questions related to each question. Think of three related questions to each question, and write them in your notebooks.

<example> Question: Do you like sports?

Related questions: What sport do you like?

What is the most popular sport in Japan?

Do you play soccer?

When did you start playing soccer?

a) Do you like music?

b) Do you like traveling?

c) Do you watch TV after supper?

d) How many books do you read in a month?

e) How many hours do you study every day?

2. Ask the questions above, and talk with your partner.

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